



July/August 2015  
Volume 11, Issue 4

# AROUND THE BLOCK

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION NEWSLETTER

Commissioner Carol Higgins O'Brien

*Does your facility have any interesting historical artifacts?*

*The DOC is in the process of gathering items to display in exhibits at HQ on a rotating basis.*

*Any ideas?*

*E-Mail Chris Fallon your ideas today.*

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MA CORRECTIONS

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## Bay State Correctional Center Repurposed

By Darren Duarte

Nearly four decades after Bay State Correctional Center (BSCC) opened its doors, its inmates are no longer counted and its staff has earned their last pay check from that medium security prison.

The end of an era for the Department of Correction happened last June. The facility is being repurposed in an effort to save taxpayer money. "There were a number of beds open in medium security facilities throughout the agency. We're (BSCC) one of the smaller medium security facilities and the numbers just fit. I think we became a victim of those numbers," said outgoing Superintendent Donald Levesque.

Bay State is now home to the department's Central Transportation Unit but prior to all the plans and decisions coming to fruition the level of uncertainty was stressful for the people who lived and worked there. "One of the challenges we faced was staffing," said Superintendent Levesque. "...trying to continue to motivate staff to do their jobs when they know the place is closing and there's uncertainty was a real test at the beginning." But Levesque and his staff aced the test by meeting with members of his workforce one by one for as long as it took. According to Don, open communication was the best remedy for the situation.

"I tried to walk around the place providing timely, honest information. We've had the employee assistance services unit here which let staff know that we support them and we understand their anxiety and to make everyone aware we will provide support as we go through this transition."

Another concern when closing down a prison has to do with the inmates and how are they going to react? "We made sure we did the best job that we could in providing adequate care and custody so that; 1) we don't have an escape 2) we don't have a suicide or 3) we don't have an increase in violence."



After all was said and done, the transition happened without incident. The superintendent credits his staff and the inmates.

With the help of the department's classification department, the DOC transitioned 332 inmates that were housed at Bay State. Levesque says the majority of them moved to NCCI Gardner, MCI Norfolk, Old Colony Correctional Center, MCI Shirley Medium and Boston Pre Release.

Levesque says he had just over a hundred staff. "...there were 69 Correctional Officers, 20 sergeants, a half a doz-

en Lieutenants and half a dozen captains and I had some support staff mixed in.

According to the superintendent, "quite a few staff ended up at Norfolk, Massachusetts Treatment Center and MCI Cedar Junction while the rest spread out over seven other facilities."

Once the uncertainty about staff and inmates were over, Levesque found himself dealing with new issues for the first time in his career.

During the third week of June, Levesque told Around the Block that "One of the first things I'm going to be doing is planning with the kitchen to move all the food out to another facility. I'm in contact with legal to figure out what do with the contraband that's been here well over a decade. That has to be resolved. What are we going to do with the employee benefit account? I'm responsible for the recycling center and the staff wellness center. Who's going to take over the responsibility of those areas? Pondville Correctional Center has clinics here, where are those clinics going to go? What are we going to do with all of our files? What are we going to do with the pool cars? As you can see I'm actually pretty busy right now."

If you happened to visit Bay State during the last few weeks of June you would have seen Levesque busy searching empty buildings to make sure there's nothing there that doesn't belong... checking on fire safety issues that might have been missed.



The most important thing that the four-year Bay State Superintendent says he will miss is all the relationships he forged along the way. He plans on giving a proper goodbye when he puts pen to paper and keyboard to printer. "I plan on writing a personal letter to everybody," Levesque said.

"I want to tell them that I appreciate the work that they put in each and every day and that the repurposing of this facility had nothing to do with them or anything they could have done. I want to let them know that I appreciate the hard work they do every day. And even though the place is changing roles, it's not happening because it was condemned, or because there was a scandal or a death or anything like that. The repurposing is purely a fiscal decision and we just fit the criteria at the time."

The letter is his way of thanking each member of the Bay State staff and to wish them luck in their new careers at the Massachusetts Department of Correction.





## A Day in the Life at SMCC

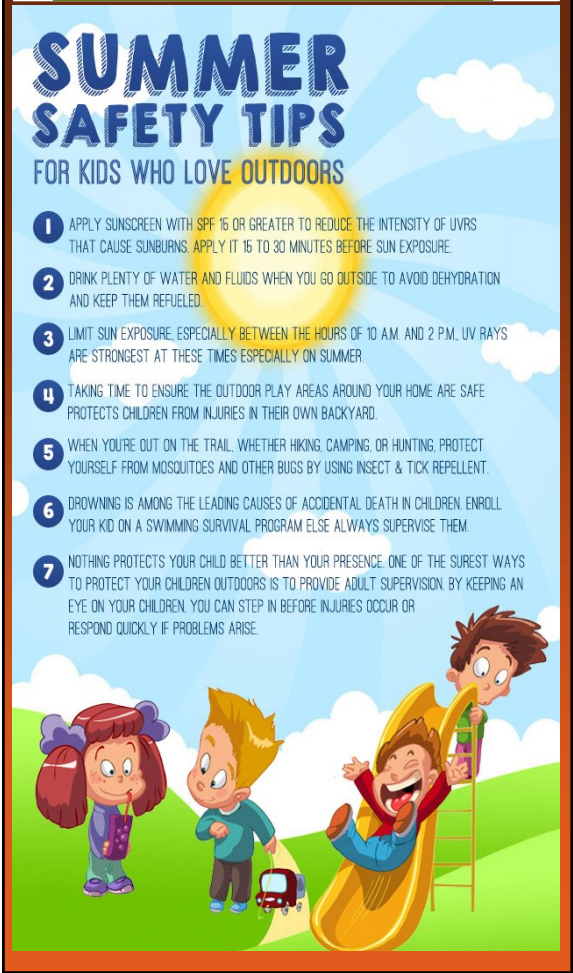
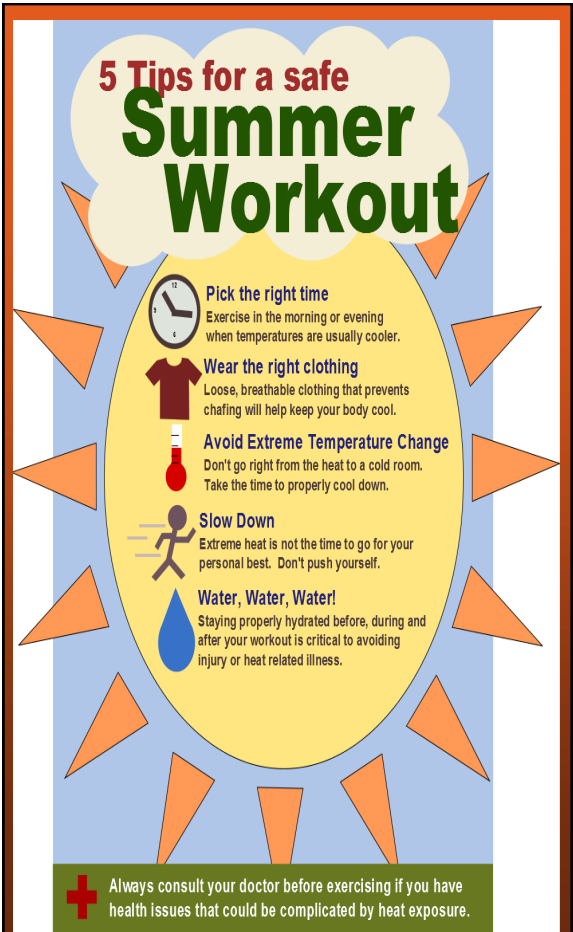
By Stacey Butkowski & Lori Costa

South Middlesex Correctional Center (SMCC), the DOC’s only female minimum/pre-release facility located in Framingham hosted a very special Job Shadow recently on June 6th. The Job Shadow program which is managed by the DOC’s Office of Diversity & Equal Opportunity is designed to give students a bird’s eye view into Corrections and the many career opportunities that the DOC has to offer.

Recruitment and Outreach Specialist CPO A/B Lori Costa in collaboration with SMCC CPO C Stacey Butkowski and other SMCC staff hosted 3 students, all of whom are studying Security and Protective Services at Grafton Job Corp. The students reside at the Job Corp Campus while receiving education and career training funded through the Department of Labor and Training. These engaging, bright and diverse group of students are aspiring to work in the law enforcement field.

Throughout the day at SMCC, the students interacted with staff in various security and non-security positions asking many questions and observing intently. This allowed students to gain an understanding of the roles and contributions staff make towards achieving the department’s mission, vision and overarching goals. The students toured the institution and Family Reunification House, shadowed staff members in several areas including housing unit operations, control center operations, classification, records, work release, and job assignments. They also learned the security functions of SMCC, how the work release program prepares inmates for re-entry, and how inmates are classified from MCI-Framingham to SMCC.

Not surprisingly, the Job Shadow event received great reviews from the students. They were amazed at how “well behaved” the inmates were (although not always the case) and how professional and straightforward staff were conducting themselves. In the end, they left SMCC with a valuable experience and a consideration for a career in corrections.



trained and “completed” 9 service dogs. Statistics show that service dogs trained in the prison setting can be “finished” up to 50% faster than strictly home trained dogs. This in turn has a huge impact on service dog client waiting lists.

Members from the NEADS and the America’s VetDogs programs, as well as weekend volunteers, the local veterans’ agent, veterinarians and inmate handlers family and friends were invited, with about 100 in attendance. Both John Moon, the director of the NEADS program, and Sheila O’Brien, the director of the AVD program, gave short speeches updating where the programs stand today. Most of the fifty states now have training sites that serve thousands of disabled military veterans and deaf and disabled Americans.



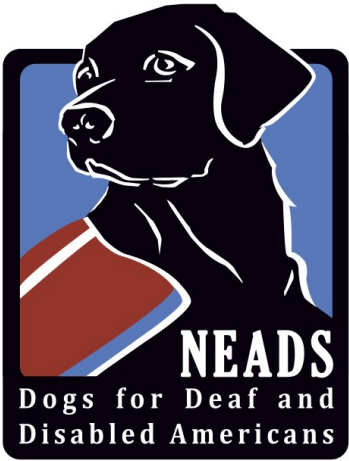
## Service Dog Handler Appreciation Night at MCI Framingham

By Dan Horton

The Service Dog Handler Appreciation Night was held at MCI-Framingham on Friday evening May 1, 2015. Correctional Program Officer (CPO) Laura Galvani, the service dog program supervisor, helped organize the event, which was held at the facilities visiting room. Deputy Superintendent Paul Henderson, CPO Dan Horton, CPO Pam Swanson, CPO Kerry Smith and Clerk V Vanessa Burns helped assist with the planning. The night was designed to celebrate a decade of service dog training at MCI-Framingham.



The evening began with CPO Galvani and Superintendent Bissonnette thanking those in attendance for their support and hard work over the years. Next, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Bruce Gelb presented the Commissioner’s Coin award. The coin is presented to those Department of Correction employees who have shown their dedication and outstanding support for a departmental program. The coin was presented to CPO Laura Galvani who has consistently supported the MCI-Framingham Service Dog Handler Program since its inception more than ten years ago.



The Directors from both programs were quick to credit Superintendent Lynn Bissonnette for her ability to recognize the benefits of raising these dogs in a prison setting and then establishing one of the first prison service dog programs in the country while Superintendent at NCCI Gardner. After the directors spoke, a short video presentation by a former inmate currently running her own dog training program was shown. This was followed by a puppy demonstration by handlers from both the NEADS and AVD programs. It showcased just how talented each dog needs to be in order to go into service as well as how much time and effort each handler puts into training her dog. A highlight of the evening was hearing from Veteran Cezary Nalaskowski with America’s VetDogs service dog Steve. His sincere appreciation for his dog and the work the inmate handlers do was felt by all. Here’s to 10 more years.



## Bay State Blaze Leave Their Mark in Lake Placid

By Amanda McKenzie



Bay State Blaze Team Members: Top L. to R: Billy Manning, Mike Morse, Jim Tessier, Logan Riley, Eric Vaughan, Dan Gilardi, Jeff Allen, and John Moniz. Bottom L. to R: Pat Carroll, Paul Northon, Nick Anderson, Hank Kasbarian, and Eric Mello

During the weekend of April 10-13th, Bay State Correctional Center's Ice Hockey team competed in the Can/Am hockey tournament located in Lake Placid, New York. This tournament consisted of 36 teams and six divisions from the US and Canada. The first game was played in the 1980 arena that the US Olympic hockey team won gold. Another historical moment for the team was when Bay State was assigned the same locker room that the 1980 US team used. Before entering locker room #5, the complete roster of the 1980 Gold medal team is listed beside the door along with a plaque of their late coach Herb Brooks. During this game, Bay State came out victorious against their first opponent Construction Miric of Quebec.

The following day in the 1932 ice arena, Bay State competed in the skills competition. Goalie Nick Anderson won best goalie for the shootout competition and Shooter Billy Manning won the shootout competition with some nifty goals. Bay State finished third in the relay race which was skated by Mike Morse, Hank Kasbarian, Dan Gilardi and Pat Carroll. It was a great showing for Bay State in the skills competition.

In the second game, Bay State secured their second straight victory against a strong New York team called the Rink Rats. The third game featured a Boston / Montreal rivalry as Bay State took the ice against Les Montreal de Canadiens in the US ice arena. This game had all the thrills of scoring and physical play as Bay State came out with a four goal lead but was unable to hold on as the Canadian's answered and won 8-5. The result of this game put the Canadian's in first place in tournament play and Bay State in second place. This set up the final medal round game between the two teams for the gold and silver in the over 30 division. During the medal round game, Bay State held their ground until the third period when Montreal opened their lead and eventually won 6-1, taking the gold medal. It was a disappointing loss but when looking at this team that only plays a couple tournaments together a year and competing in an international tournament, a silver medal is commendable and without doubt, put this small facility on the map.

## DOC Aids in Major Drug Sweep

Investigators with the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC) joined federal, local and state police officials in one of the largest sweep of drugs and weapons in the city of Boston on Thursday, June 18, 2015. The DOC partnered with the U.S. Attorney, the FBI and Boston Police and State Police to organize a raid of several locations across Boston.

DOC Chief of Investigative Services Patrick DePalo attended a news conference announcing several arrests, along with the seizure of more than a million dollars in cash and several weapons. FBI Special Agent Vincent Lisi was one of the officials who spoke to reporters.

"It is one of, if not the largest, gang takedowns that we've seen in Boston — to arrest the most dangerous subjects out there," said Lisi who is a special agent in charge of the FBI's Boston office.

"I truly believe what we did... makes Boston that much of a safer place to live," he said.

## Industrial Instructor Bobby Reis Runs for a Cause

By James Proctor

Industrial Instructor III Bobby Reis was awarded a number for the Boston Marathon through the DOC's marathon program. A serious commitment is needed to attempt and complete this very challenging race.

Upon learning that he was awarded a number to participate in the Boston Marathon, Bobby immediately started a "GoFundMe" site (\$1.00 a mile to see a child smile) to raise money for the Massachusetts Hospital school in Canton.

After playing in the wheelchair football competition in December as an MCI Norfolk Knight, Bobby was affected by the heart and dedication shown by the staff and children at the Massachusetts Hospital School. Upon learning of Bobby's efforts, The staff at OCCC dedicated a "Pizza Monday" to the cause and were able to raise a significant amount of money as well. It is this sort of collaborative effort that highlights how the men and women of our agency are dedicated to making a difference in the community.



Industrial Instructor Reis (right) being presented with a number to run the Boston Marathon

## Volunteer Muralist leaves an Impression on BSH

By James Rioux

"All real works of art look as though they were done in joy."

— Robert Henri



A little bit of joy came to the State Hospital this April. Over the course of three short days, Muralist Alex Cook painted a large scale mural in the Programs corridor in Bridgewater State Hospital, which houses the Chapel, School, Library and Club House. With the assistance of patient and inmate artists, Volunteer Cook transformed the hallway into a picturesque field of nature, complete with birds, farmland, and birch trees. His most significant artistic image painted during the project was placed near the chapel in the form of three simple words, "YOU ARE LOVED". Cook recalls first painting these words eighteen months ago outside of an elementary school in New Orleans. There he met

teenagers who had experienced hardships, came from difficult upbringings and had low self-esteem and self-worth. He decided what better way to show care and concern for a community than to paint these words in a public place for all to see. He states that the impact on the students was extraordinary, resulting in a lasting dialogue that has since bolstered their sense of community. He hopes that the inmate and patient population will also feel encouraged by these words, help affirm their self-worth, and enable them to make better decisions in the future. This mural project is part of the plan to create a more therapeutic environment for the Hospital, supporting and enhancing treatment.

When asked what persuaded him to come to the hospital and share his talents, he stated that he simply responded to the need to reach people in difficult circumstances and wanted to help bring value and purpose to their lives. He hopes the serenity of nature scenes, as well as the colorful geometric designs will help to reduce the isolation associated with incarceration and hospitalization and create an intimate space where patients and inmates can experience a greater sense of community.

Cook describes his artistic style as "simple" so to appeal to all age groups, genders, and cultures. He particularly enjoys painting pictures of nature because he finds that most people appreciate and respond well to the organic beauty that surrounds us all. The inmate and patient artists who assisted with this project reported having a great learning experience and appreciated the opportunity to promote a healing environment for their peers and other staff members. Along with painting, Mr. Cook also is a talented guitarist, singer, and songwriter. Bridgewater State Hospital is lucky to have had the pleasure of Mr. Cook's painting talents and look forward to benefits of the other artistic talents he possesses and his willingness to share those gifts with our population. The staff, and population thank Mr. Cook for his time, and are happy to report that "coming to BSH was a joyful experience" for him as well.

If you are interested in viewing more of Alex's work, he invites you to visit [youareloved-murals.com](http://youareloved-murals.com) or [stonebalancer.com](http://stonebalancer.com).





# 4

## What is EQ? How does it relate to me?

Many times while working in challenging and frustrating environments you may not realize how the situation is truly affecting you. Particularly in this line of work, it’s important to be able to identify and manage your feelings appropriately so it doesn’t negatively impact your performance and/or your relationships with your peers. Emotional intelligence has something to do with it. Adding emotional intelligence to your tool kit of skills might be one of the most important things you can do for your career as it shows to have practical value in the workplace.

We all know what IQ is, now what is EQ? Emotional intelligence, also known as EQ, is defined as the ability to identify, understand, and manage emotions as it relates to oneself or as it relates to others. Having the ability to understand how you are feeling in any given moment allows you to communicate effectively, better navigate challenges and defuse conflict. Emotional intelligence is a trending topic in the professional world these days. Employers, specifically Human Resource professionals, are talking about this in the realm of hiring, conflict resolution and overall job performance. Studies show that the higher the level of EQ an employee has, the more likely they are to succeed in a demanding and challenging setting. EQ also correlates with succession planning; strong leaders can be identified by their level of ability to handle stressful situations with ease and success, and thus, more likely to obtain leadership positions. Not only is EQ important in the professional world but it impacts many different aspects of your daily life, your personal relationships as well as your mental and physical health.



confidence.  
Self-management – You’re able to control impulsive feelings and behaviors, body language, and manage your emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances with ease.  
Social awareness – You can understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people, pick up on emotional cues, feel comfortable socially, and recognize the power dynamics in a group or organization.  
Relationship management – You know how to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, work well in a team, and manage conflict.

Developing emotional intelligence through a few key skills:  
The first two skills are essential for controlling and managing overwhelming stress and the last three skills greatly improve communication.  
Each skill builds on the lessons learned in practicing the earlier skills and includes:  
The ability to quickly reduce stress in the moment in a variety of settings;  
The ability to recognize your emotions and keep them from overwhelming you;  
The ability to connect emotionally with others by using nonverbal communication;  
The ability to use humor and play to stay connected in challenging situations;  
The ability to resolve conflicts positively and with confidence.

Hopefully, by taking a look at some of these skills it will help you to identify some areas of improvement and utilize them in unpleasant situations.  
To learn more about EQ and how it may help you in your life check out [helpguide.org](http://helpguide.org).

## Here are 10 Ways to Enhance Your Emotional Intelligence:

1. Don't interrupt or change the subject. If feelings are uncomfortable, we may want to avoid them by interrupting or distracting ourselves. Sit down at least twice a day and ask, "How am I feeling?" It may take a little time for the feelings to arise. Allow yourself that small space of time, uninterrupted.
2. Don't judge or edit your feelings too quickly. Try not to dismiss your feelings before you have a chance to think them through. Healthy emotions often rise and fall in a wave, rising, peaking, and fading naturally. Your aim should be not to cut off the wave before it peaks.
3. See if you can find connections between your feelings and other times you have felt the same way. When a difficult feeling arises, ask yourself, "When have I felt this feeling before?" Doing this may help you to realize if your current emotional state is reflective of the current situation, or of another time in your past.
4. Connect your feelings with your thoughts. When you feel something that strikes you as out of the ordinary, it is always useful to ask, "What do I think about that?" Often times, one of our feelings will contradict others. That's normal. Listening to your feelings is like listening to all the witnesses in a court case. Only by admitting all the evidence will you be able to reach the best verdict.
5. Listen to your body. A knot in your stomach while driving to work may be a clue that your job is a source of stress. A flutter of the heart when you pick up a girl you have just started to date may be a clue that this could be "the real thing." Listening to these sensations and the underlying feelings that they signal will allow you to process with your powers of reason.
6. If you don't know how you're feeling, ask someone else. People seldom realize that others are able to judge how they are feeling. Ask someone who knows you (and whom you trust) how you are coming across. You may find the answer both surprising and illuminating.
7. Tune in to your unconscious feelings. How can you become more aware of your unconscious feelings? Try free association. While in a relaxed state, allow your thoughts to roam freely and watch where they go. Analyze your dreams. Keep a notebook and pen at the side of your bed and jot down your dreams as soon as you wake up. Pay special attention to dreams that repeat or are charged with powerful emotion.
8. Ask yourself: How do I feel today? Start by rating your overall sense of well-being on a scale of 0 and 100 and write the scores down in a daily log book. If your feelings seem extreme one day, take a minute or two to think about any ideas or associations that seem to be connected with the feeling.
9. Write thoughts and feelings down. Research has shown that writing down your thoughts and feelings can help profoundly. A simple exercise like this could take only a few hours per week.
10. Know when enough is enough. There comes a time to stop looking inward; learn when it’s time to shift your focus outward. Studies have shown that encouraging people to dwell upon negative feelings can amplify these feelings. Emotional intelligence involves not only the ability to look within, but also to be present in the world around you.

-Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal

## Community Correspondents Network

- Daniel Alves
- Lisa Antunes
- Collette Blais
- Vanessa Burns
- Patricia Capozzoli
- Lori Costa
- John Cunningham
- Jason Dobson
- Ryan Donlon
- Darren Duarte
- Sherry Elliot
- Christopher Fallon
- Bet Gentz
- Jaileen Hopkins
- Kimberley Lincoln
- Marianne Lizotte
- Mary Lynch
- Anne Manning
- Brenda Melanson
- Gregory McCann
- James Morrone
- Debra Moschos
- John O’Malley
- Chris Pearson
- James Rioux
- Armando Santo
- Cara Savelli
- Christopher Shlimon
- Kate Sullivan
- Gary Temple
- Shawn Zoldak



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Commissioner Carol Higgins O’Brien

### Facility Key

- BSCC- Bay State Correctional Center
- BPRC- Boston Pre-Release Center
- BSH- Bridgewater State Hospital
- LSH or LSHCU- Lemuel Shattuck Hospital Correctional Unit
- MASAC- MA Alcohol & Substance Abuse Center
- MTC- MA Treatment Center
- MCI-CJ- Cedar Junction
- MCI-C- Concord
- MCI-F- Framingham
- MCI-N- Norfolk
- MCI-P- Plymouth
- MCI-S- Shirley
- NCCI- North Central Correctional Institution
- NECC-Northeastern Correctional Center
- OSCC— Old Colony Correctional Center
- PCC- Pondville Correctional Center
- SMCC—South Middlesex Correctional Center
- SBCC- Souza Baranowski Correctional Center

## Retirements:

- |                               |                                     |                                    |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| George Antonioni – April 1984 | Larry Givens – August 1990          | Christine Pandozzi – February 1973 | Edward Tierney Sr. – October 1987 |
| Mark Bernard – August 1982    | John Isherwood – March 1982         | Michael Paquin – January 1985      | Randy Weikel – March 1995         |
| John Cahill – February 1981   | Daniel Kelley – May 1998            | Janice Posey – November 1979       |                                   |
| Steven Chomo – February 2010  | David Larrow – June 1998            | Bruce Rivest – November 1987       |                                   |
| Ronald Cote – August 1989     | Maurice Laurence Jr. – March 1983   | Javier Rosa – May 1983             |                                   |
| Joseph Cregg – April 1982     | William Luzier Jr. – September 2008 | Elijah Swain – October 1988        |                                   |
| Sara Dunham – June 1984       | Joseph McDermott – January 1982     | Kevin Sweeney – September 1989     |                                   |